DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 181 511 CS 502 784

AUTHOR Kim, Young Y.
TITLE Dynamics of Intrapersonal and Interpersonal Communication: A Study of Indochinese Refugees in the Initial Phase of Acculturation.
PUB DATE Nov 79
NOTE 42p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Speech Communication Association (65th, San Antonio, TX, November 10-13, 1979)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Acculturation; *Adjustment (to Environment); Adjustment Problems; Behavior Patterns; Biculturalism; *Communicative Competence (Languages); *Indochinese; Interpersonal Relationship; Refugees; *Self Concept; *Speech Communication
IDENTIFIERS Communication Research

ABSTRACT

The psychological and social adjustment patterns of 809 Indochinese refugee heads of household in Illinois were examined by collecting data on their intrapersonal and interpersonal communication patterns. Four of five propositions derived from an interactive communication theory of the acculturation process were supported. The Indochinese refugee's interpersonal communication with Americans was positively related to a positive self-image, to perceptions of similarity between self and Americans, to lower feelings of alienation, and to greater English competence. Although the proposed relationship between the immigrant's acculturation motivation and interpersonal communication with Americans was not supported, the low reliability of the measurement items used in that portion of the survey discourages a decisive conclusion. (Author/RL)

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ED181511

DYNAMICS OF INTRAPERSONAL AND INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION:

A STUDY OF INDOCHINESE REFUGEES IN THE INITIAL PHASE OF ACCULTURATION

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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By
Young Y. Kim, Ph.D.
University Professor of
Communication Science
Governors State University
Park Forest South, IL 60466
(312) 534-5000

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Paper presented at the 65th Annual Meeting of the Speech-Communication Association, San Antonio, Texas, November 10-13, 1979. The analysis herein is based on a portion of the preliminary results from an on-going research project on Indochinese refugees in the State of Illinois. The Project has been sponsored by the Travelers Aid Society of Metropolitan Chicago Incorporating Immigrants Service League, based on funding available through the Illinois Department of Public Aid and the Governor's Information Center for Asian Assistance under PL95540.

CS502784

ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on the psychological and social adjustment of Indochinese refugees in the State of Illinois. The adjustment patterns of the refugees are examined by their intrapersonal and interpersonal communication patterns. Variables analyzed in this study include: self image, discrepancy between perceptions of self/others, alienation, acculturation motivation, language competence, and degree of involvement in interpersonal communication relationships with members of the host society on three levels of intimacy (casual acquaintances, casual friends, and intimate friends).

The data were collected from 809 Indochinese heads of households during May through September 1979 through personal interviews and questionnaires. Findings are reported in terms of: 1) patterns of intrapersonal and interpersonal communication among the Indochinese refugees and 2) relationships among the variables within and between the two dimensions of communication (intrapersonal communication and interpersonal communication). Five propositions were derived from an interactive communication theory of the general acculturation process. The data supported four of the five propositions.

INTRODUCTION

Since April, 1975, when the first group of refugees were evacuated from Vietnam, approximately 254,000 Indochinese refugees have been resettled within the United States. At present, there are over 400,000 such Indochinese refugees in Southeast Asian camps. As long as the hostilities and government repression continue in Southeast Asia, refugees will continue to seek to immigrate. Some of these refugees will undoubtedly become eligible for admission and resettlement in the United States. It is expected that, over the next two years, the number of Indochinese refugees in the United States will increase to approximately 500,000.[1]

Although the 254,000 refugees in the United States have come from the three nations of Indochina -- Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam, there are four ethnic groups that are culturally and linguistically distinct. They are Cambodian, Laotian, Lao H'mong (from Laos), and Vietnamese. The Indochinese refugees have now resettled throughout the United States, particularly in California (33.0%) and in Texas (9.8%). Among the other states, Pennsylvania, Washington, West Virginia, Louisiana, Illinois and Virginia have 3.0% to 4.5% of the total Indochinese refugee population.[2]

From the beginning, the Indochinese resettlement program in the United States has been a joint effort of the private and public sectors. The private, voluntary agencies have undertaken almost all of the initial sponsorship and resettlement of refugees in this country. Through their religious congregations and the support of their benefactors, virtually all of the 254,000 Indochinese in the U.S. have been resettled with American individuals, families, or groups throughout the country. The federal government has, at the same time, provided full support for the state and local government agencies that have provided for the welfare and special social service needs of the refugees.

Almost five years have passed since the first arrival of the Indochinese refugees in the United States. The Federal and local governments have begun to investigate the resettlement and adjustment situations of the refugees by providing research grants. Each of the states of California and Texas (the two states with the largest concentration of Indochinese refugees) has recently conducted an extensive study of its Indochinese population.[3] Since November, 1978, the State of Illinois has been conducting a comprehensive study of the Indochinese refugees residing in the state. Although these and other projects have been designed and conducted independently of one another, all share a common research purpose, i.e., to determine and evaluate the patterns of resettlement of the Indochinese refugees to the new culture during their first few years in the U.S.

The present paper is based on a portion of the preliminary results from the ongoing Indochinese research project in the State of Illinois.

The focus of the analysis will be the psychological and social adjustment of the refugees as reflected in their intrapersonal and interpersonal communication patterns. More specifically, the paper attempts to: 1) describe patterns of intrapersonal and interpersonal communication among the Indochinese refugees, 2) to explore the relationship among the variables of these two dimensions of communication, and 3) to test five propositions derived from an interactive, communication theory of the general acculturation process among the Indochinese population who are in their initial phase of acculturation.

THEORY

The theoretical basis of the present analysis has been elaborated on elsewhere (Kim, 1979). In this section, therefore, only a brief outline of the theory will be presented focusing primarily on the intrapersonal and interpersonal communication patterns of an immigrant in the process of acculturation.

The Systems Perspective

Each immigrant or refugee can be viewed as an open system exchanging materials, energies, and information with the environment. An immigrant, as an open system, shows a quality called adaptation. That is, an immigrant possesses the ability to react to the new cultural environment in a way that is favorable in some sense to the continued operation of his/her existence. From the systems perspective, then, acculturation can be defined as an adaptive process which occurs in individuals raised in one culture and moved to another culture. Communication is the fundamental process in

and through which acculturation occurs. Through communication, an immigrant succeeds or fails to evoke the kind of interpersonal relations in which he/she can pursue his/her goals.

From the systems perspective, all human communication can be categorized into intrapersonal (or personal) and social communication (Ruben, 1975). Intrapersonal communication refers to the mental processes in which an individual organizes himself/herself in and with his/her socio-cultural environment. Intrapersonal communication is closely linked to social communication when two or more individuals organize with one another in an effort to adapt to their environment (Ruben, 1975, p. 171). Through social communication, an immigrant acquires knowledge and understanding of his/her new socio-cultural environment and adopts appropriate ways to respond to it. Such knowledge and understanding provides a basis of the immigrant's intrapersonal communication, which, in turn, affects his/her social communication patterns.

Interpersonal communication is one of the key elements of social communication, along with observation of one's environment including mass media content. Compared to mere observation, interpersonal communication is generally considered more intense, direct, and has a detailed influence on the immigrant's adaptation to the host sociocultural system (Kim, 1977, p.74). The simultaneous feedback in the interpersonal communication process is an active acculturation agent, reinforcing the norms, rules, and behavior patterns of the host society.

Intrapersonal and interpersonal communication are two interdependent, interactive, and inseparable processes of communication. Through intrapersonal and interpersonal communication, an immigrant learns and internalizes, symbolically, the accepted cultural norms,

operating principles, habits, rituals, protocols, required competencies, ethical standards, and laws in the host sociocultural system.

From the theoretical framework outlined in the foregoing paragraphs, the following axioms are derived characterizing an immigrant's acculturation process from the communication systems' perspective.

Axiom 1: The acculturation process is a continuous, adaptive process which occurs in individuals raised in one culture and moved to another culture.

Axiom 2: Communication is the fundamental process in and through which acculturation occurs.

Axiom 3: Communication patterns of an immigrant at one point of time reflect the degree of his/her acculturation.

Axiom 4: The two interactive, interdependent dimensions of communication -- intrapersonal and interpersonal communication -- affect the acculturation process.

Axion 5: The patterns of intrapersonal and social communication of an immigrant at one point of time reflect the degree of his/her acculturation.

Constructs

Based on the foregoing theoretical framework, a number of constructs are identified below as some of the aspects of intrapersonal and interpersonal communication. Although these constructs do not exhaust all possible aspects of the complex processes of intrapersonal and interpersonal communication, they are considered most relevant and useful constructs to study the acculturation process.

Self Image: An immigrant's self image in the host socio-cultural system is proposed as an important intrapersonal communication construct. An immigrant's self image is viewed as a result of interaction between the immigrant and the host environment. At the same time, the positive or negative self image of an immigrant plays a crucial role in orienting

the immigrant to interpersonal communication with members of the host society.

Discrepancy between Images of Self/Others: An immigrant's perception of congruency or incongruency between himself/herself and members of the host society assumes special importance in the acculturation process. The relative distance between an immigrant's perception of his/her self and the members of the host society is considered inversely related to his/her interpersonal communication with members of the host society.

Alienation: Another intrapersonal communication construct closely related to the above two constructs is the feeling of alienation experienced by an immigrant. An immigrant's feeling of alienation is viewed as a result of dynamic interaction between the immigrant and the host environment. An inverse, reciprocal relationship is expected between an immigrant's feeling of alienation and the degree to which he/she participates in interpersonal communication with the members of the host society.

Motivation for Acculturation: Another construct of intrapersonal communication important to acculturation is an immigrant's motivation to acculturate. The motivation for acculturation is defined as an immigrant's desire to learn about, participate in, and be oriented toward the host culture. The immigrant's motivation for acculturation has been found to affect the process of adapting to the host communication networks. Here, the reverse relationship is also proposed to be true, i.e., the more actively one participates in interpersonal communication with members of the host society, the greater will be his/her motivation for acculturation.

Competence in Host Language: The importance of the host language in the acculturation and the communication interaction of an immigrant is self evident. Previous studies have largely supported the generalization that the learning of the host language aids acculturation (Breton, 1964; Chance, 1965; Richmond, 1967; Graves, 1967; Price, 1968, Kim, 1977a). In this study, the competence in the host language is considered not only to promote, but also to be promoted by, an immigrant's interpersonal communication with members of the host society.

Constructs of Interpersonal Communication

An immigrant's interpersonal communication in the host sociocultural system occurs through interpersonal relationships. Interpersonal relationship patterns represent the purpose, function, and product of the immigrant's interpersonal communication (Lazarsfeld & Merton, 1964).

According to the "co-orientation" theory (Pearce & Stamm, 1973), two individuals who develop an intimate friendship with each other necessarily share a high degree of communication co-orientation, i.e., the perceived similarity between the individuals in their orientation toward the topic of their communication. An immigrant's interpersonal relationship patterns on various levels of intimacy are an effective and vital component of understanding his/her intrapersonal communication patterns.

The development in interpersonal relationships between people can be viewed roughly in three stages: (1) casual acquaintances one knows well enough to talk with when one happens to meet them, (2) casual friends or colleagues who are close enough to be invited to each other's home, and (3) intimate or close friends with whom one can discuss private and personal problems. (See Kim, 1977c, 1978a, 1978b.) Based on

such differential levels of interpersonal relationships, we can examine the degree to which an immigrant has been incorporated into the host social network as well as his/her intrapersonal communication patterns.

Given the key constructs of intrapersonal and interpersonal communication and the interactive theory of acculturation outlined earlier, the following propositions will be tested in the present survey of Indochinese refugees in their initial phase of acculturation:

Proposition 1: There is a positive relationship between an immigrant's self image and his/her participation in interpersonal communication with members of the host society.

Proposition 2: There is an inverse relationship between the perceived discrepancy in an immigrant's image of himself/herself and of Americans and his/her participation in interpersonal communication with them.

Proposition 3: There is an inverse relationship between an immigrant's feeling of alienation and his/her participation in interpersonal communication with members of the host society.

Proposition 4: There is a positive relationship between an immigrant's motivation for acculturation and his/her participation in interpersonal communication with members of the host society.

Proposition 5: There is a positive relationship between an immigrant's competency in the host language and his/her participation in interpersonal communication with members of the host society.

C. METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The Survey

The survey of Indochinese refugees was conducted during May through September, 1979, throughout the State of Illinois. All identifiable Indochinese family households in the state were approached in this survey. A family household, in this study, is defined as the collective residential unit consisting of one or more members of an immediate or extended family.[4] Within a household, one adult, preferably the head of the household, was requested to participate in the survey. When there was more than one family identified in the same residence, the head of each household was included.

Due to the high mobility of the refugee population within the state, inflow and outflow from secondary migration between states, and the rapid increase of new refugee arrivals from Southeast Asia, considerable time and effort was devoted to compiling a comprehensive, accurate list of the names and addresses of as many Indochinese refugees as possible. The lists were provided by four voluntary agencies and six educational and public assistance institutions. After eliminating any duplication of names and addresses, a total of 3370 households were identified, of which 248 were Cambodian, 352 were Lao H'mong, 250 were Laotian and 2520 were Vietnamese.

The survey was comprised of three phases: Phase 1 (May-June, 1979), a mail questionnaire survey sent to all Indochinese households throughout the state; Phase 2 (May-July, 1979), a survey administered to Indochinese persons attending English classes through the cooperation of 13 Illinois community colleges and other educational institutions; and Phase 3 (July-September, 1979), personal interviews of Indochinese

persons in their homes throughout the state. The adoption of this three-phased research strategy permitted access to a larger, more diverse and representative group of Indochinese refugees than would have been achieved through any single method of data collection. Second, the procedure of varying the mode of data collection provided an internal check on the reliability and the validity of the findings obtained in any one phase by examining many of the same issues in all three phases of the project. Third, the data collection process provided sufficient flexibility to measure diverse aspects of the refugees, ranging from standard socio-demographic indicators to psychological, social and cultural adjustment patterns. Fourth, the research strategy made the overall data collection process economically feasible and efficient while satisfying the above three merits vital to scientific research.

A standard questionnaire was used in the three phases of the survey. Each questionnaire was translated into three languages: Cambodian, Laotian and Vietnamese. A back-translation method was used to minimize any discrepancies in meaning between the original English version and the translated versions (Werner & Campbell, 1970). The questionnaire was comprised of two distinct parts, each addressing different thematic issues. The first part of the questionnaire dealt with the refugees' socio-demographic characteristics, service utilizaiton and evaluation and major service deeds and problems of adjustment in the United States. In the second part, questions concerning the intrapersonal and interpersonal communication patterns were included, along with other items. In the mail-

questionnaire survey (Phase 1), only items from the first part of the questionnaire were used in order to maximize the return rate. In Phase 2 and Phase 3, both parts of the questionnaire were used.

All in all, 1777 out of the 3370 questionnaires used in the three phases of the survey were completed and returned. Among the 1593 non-responses, 1178 were due to a change of address. The actual return-rate among those who did receive a questionnaire through the mail or who were contacted in person was 81%. Among the 1777 questionnaires completed and returned, 968 were from Phase 1, 349 were from Phase 2, and 460 were from Phase 3.

Measurement Items

As discussed previously, the key constructs of intrapersonal and interpersonal communication patterns were included in the second part of the survey questionnaire. The measurement items that were used in the present survey of Indochinese refugees are briefly described below.

Image of Self/Others: The refugee's perception of self in relation to Americans (as well as other members of the same ethnic group) was measured using an eight-item Likert scale referring to eight personality attributes: "tense," "patient," "withdrawn," "selfish," "happy," "poor," "confident," and "humble". Each of the personality attributes was chosen as a critical area of differences between the general personality of Americans and that of the Indochinese refugees. The respondent was asked to rate himself/herself, the American people, and the members of his/her own ethnic group (Cambodian, Laotian, Lao H'mong, and Vietnamese) on each of the eight attributes as "very," "moderately," "only slightly," "not at all," or "don't know". These eight items were correlated moderately with one another in measuring the immigrant's perception of Self,

Americans, and Ethnic Group. Cronbach's Alpha for the three scales of Self, Americans, and Ethnic Group was .70, .80, and .70 respectively.

The congruency or incongruency in the refugee's perception of Self, the Americans, and Ethnic Group, was assessed by taking the absolute values of distance between the refugee's ratings of Self, Americans, and Ethnic Group. The computed distance scores on the eight personality attributes were correlated with one another moderately. Cronbach's Alpha for the Scale of Discrepancy between Self and Americans was .72, for the Scale of Discrepancy between Self and Ethnic Group .67, and for the Scale of Discrepancy between Americans and Ethnic Group .72.

Competence in Host Language: To assess the refugee's knowledge of English, three questions were asked concerning the degree of difficulty in understanding Americans when they speak, the degree of difficulty for Americans in understanding the respondent's English and the frequency of hesitation in talking to Americans. It was assumed that the respondent's own subjective evaluation of his/her English competence was probably as influential on his/her interpersonal communication behaviors as the actual command of the language. Cronbach's Alpha for the three items was .75.

Motivation for Acculturation: The refugee's motivation for acculturation was measured by the three questions asking their level of interest and desire to learn the host norms and culture, in making friends with Americans, and in learning current events in the United States. For the three items, Cronbach's Alpha was .67. The relatively low correlations among the items can perhaps be attributed to the difficulty of testing the complex psychological state through simple questions. Distribution of responses on the four-point scales ("little," "a little," "somewhat," and "a lot") showed a skewness toward a higher level

of motivation suggesting that an artifact of "social desirability" might have biased the responses. Nonetheless, the three items were considered to provide a reasonable basis, albeit probably not sensitive enough, from which the immigrant's motivation, or at least, the extent to which acculturation was considered socially desirable could be estimated.

Alienation: In assessing the respondent's feeling of alienation, a ten-item Likert scale was constructed. The ten items were selected for their relevancy and importance in the acculturation process. The first component of the ten items, social isolation, measured feelings of loneliness and rejection, as well as difficulties in making American friends. The second component, cultural estrangement, consisted of items measuring feelings of awkwardness about living in the United States, as well as difficulties in understanding the American way of life. The third component, powerlessness, primarily measured the extent to which the respondent felt he could improve his life in America, and, make some contribution to American society. The respondent was asked to react to the ten statements by selecting one of five categories "strongly agree," "agree," "disagree," "strongly disagree," and "don't know." The ten items were moderately correlated with one another in the scale of Alienation (Cronbach's Alpha = .75).

Interpersonal Communication: The refugee's involvement in interpersonal communication with members of the host society was measured by the volume and intimacy of his/her social relationships. The respondent was asked to report, as accurately as possible, the numbers of interpersonal relationships (with members of his/her own ethnic group, other Indochinese refugees, White Americans, Black Americans, and other foreign-born immigrants) on three levels of intimacy: casual acquaintances, casual friends, and intimate friends. Casual acquaintances were defined as those individuals the respondent knew well enough to talk with when they happen to meet, casual friends as those who were close enough to meet in one another's homes, and intimate friends as those with whom the respondent could discuss his/her private and personal problems.

D. RESULTS

The following analysis is based on the responses from 809 Indochinese refugees who participated in Phase 2 and Phase 3 of the survey. As noted previously, the items on intrapersonal and interpersonal communication patterns were not included in the mail questionnaire survey, Phase 1. Of the 809 respondents, 43% were Vietnamese, 23% were Laotians, 20% were Lao H'mong and 14% were Cambodians. This ethnic composition of the respondents in Phase 2 and Phase 3 closely corresponds to the total number of respondents in all three phases of the survey. More than half (56%) of the 809 respondents had been living in the United States less than one year at the time of the survey. The remaining 44% included respondents who had been living in the United States from one to five years.

Results reported in this section include: 1) a description of the Indochinese intrapersonal and interpersonal communication patterns, 2) relationships among variables of intrapersonal communication, 3) relationships among interpersonal communication variables, and 4) relationships among variables of intrapersonal and interpersonal communication. Based on these analyses, the five propositions presented in Section B will be tested for empirical verification.

Patterns of Intrapersonal Communication

Image of Self/Others: The respondent's ratings of Self, Americans, and his/her own Ethnic Group are described in Table 1. The refugees

Table (1): Percentage Distribution of Perception of Self(S), Ethnic group(E), and Americans(A)

		Very	Moderately	Slightly	Not at all	Don't Know	Total	(N)
	S	15%	20%	28%	23%	14%	100%	(765)
"Tense"	E	11	24	30	15	20	100	(752)
	A	9	16	17	17	41	100	(758)
	S	2	12	39	41	6	100	(763)
"Impat-	E	1	10	38	36	15	100	(765)
ient"	A	8	10	24	15	35	100	(751)
	S	12	22	31	28	7	100	(762)
"With-	E	9	24	31	17	19	100	(757)
drawn"	A	4	.0	12	35	39	100	(746)
	S	5	16	24	45	10	100	(770)
"Self-	E	6	22	32	20	20	100	(752)
ish"	A	18	21	11	13	37	100	(752)
	S	7	39	34	13	7	100	(763)
"Confi-	E	23	22	34	15	6	100	(759)
dent"	A	46	29	19	4	2	100	(750)
	S	5	17	36	26	22	100	(761)
"Arro-	E	2	16	34	26	22	100	(749)
gant"	A	19	16	15	11	39	100	(745)
	S	6	18	37	23	16	100	(766)
"Happy"	E	13	18	32	23	14	100	(765)
	A	28	48	18	5	1	100	(753)
	S	44	34	14	5	3	100	(770)
"Poor"	E	28	35	14	7	16	100	(761)
	A	1	11	19	37	32	100	(750)

tended to evaluate themselves more negatively than they evaluated either the Americans or their own Ethnic Group, on such personality attributes as"tense," "withdrawn," "happy," "poor," and "confident." On the other hand, the Americans were rated more negatively than Self and own Ethnic Group on such characteristics as "patient," "selfish," and "arrogant." In general, the respondents tended to give "don't know" answers to questions concerning Americans more often than in answers to questions concerning Self and own Ethnic Group. The Ethnic Group was perceived more positively than Self, but less positively than Americans, on all of the eight personality attributes.

The discrepancies in the respondent's images of Self, Americans and own Ethnic Group showed similar results. The reported discrepancy between Self and Americans was greater than that of Self and own Ethnic Group. The mean discrepancy score for Self-Americans was 11.1, for Self-Ethnic Group 6.4, and for Ethnic Group-Americans 8.0. The maximum and minimum scores of discrepancy were 24 and 0, respectively, for all three comparisons.

Alienation: A considerable degree of a feeling of alienation was observed among the refugees in their responses to the Alienation Scale. For example, 54% of the respondents agreed, moderately or strongly, to the statement, "I feel awkward and out-of-place in America," 62% to "It is difficult for me to understand the American way of life," and 63% to "I feel all alone in America." Also, a majority of the respondents disagreed to such statements as "The future looks very bright to me in America," "As an individual, I can contribute something to American society," and "I feel that the Americans that I know like me." A strong attachment to the original culture was suggested in the respondents' overwhelming disagreements (73%) with the statement, "Many things my parents

taught me in my home country are not useful in America." A mixed response was expressed with regard to the statement, "It is easy for me to make American friends."

The overall response pattern to the Alienation Scale seems to reflect the difficulties that the refugees experience in adjusting to the new environment, their doubts about the attitudes of Americans toward them, and their future contribution to the American society. However, an optimism was also seen concerning the respondents' own future in America as well as their sense of belongingness in the United States. More than half of the respondents disagreed with the statement, "There is little I can do to improve my life in this country," and at the same time, agreed with the statement, "Ifeel I belong in American society." (See Table 2.)

English Competence: An overall lack of English competence was indicated by the respondents. As shown in Table 3, 70% of the respondents reported that they comprehended less than half of the English spoken during a conversation. Almost 70% felt that Americans understood their English less than half of the time. Furthermore, almost all (92%) of the respondents reported that they frequently hesitated to speak to Americans because of their inability to express themselves in English. (See Table 3.)

Motivation for Acculturation: As noted previously, distribution of responses on the four-point scale ("little," "a little," "somewhat," and "a lot") of Motivation for Acculturation showed a skewness toward a higher level of motivation. More than 50% of the respondents expressed that it was very important for them "to learn about and understand the ways that American people behave and think"; "to make friends with the

Table (2): Percentage Distribution of Responses to Alienation Items

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	Total	(N)
"I feel awkward and out of place in America"	25%	29%	23%	12%	11%	100%	(766)
"It is easy for me to make American friends"	23%	31%	24%	22%	0%	100%	(687)
"The future looks very bright for me in America"	11%	15%	41%	22%	11%	100%	(768)
"Many things my parents taught me in my home country are not useful in America"	9%	10%	27%	46%	8%	100%	(765)
"As an individual, I can contribute something to American society"	5%	14%	44%	30%	7%	100%	(766)
"It is difficult for me to understand the American way of life"	26%	36%	18%	9%	11%	100%	(775)
"I feel like I belong in American society"	29%	29%	30%	12%	0%	100%	(675)
"There is little I can do to improve my life in this country"	14%	21%	42%	17%	6%	100%	(751)
"I feel that the Americans that I know like me"	9%	23%	42%	15%	11%	100%	(757)
"I feel all alone in America"	25%	38%	22%	8%	7%	100%	(749)

Table (3): Percentage Distribution of Self-Assessed English Competency

	None	A Little	Half	Mostly	Almost Completely	Total
Listening Comprehension	23%	47%	13%	15%	2%	100% (791)
Speaking Ability	25%	44%	15%	14%	2%	100% (788)
Self Confidence	57%	35%	13%	15%	--	100% (755)

American people," and "to learn about the current political, economic and social situations and issues of American society." (See Table 4.) The significant degree of skewness towards a higher level of motivation suggests that these three items are not sensitive enough to make distinctions in individual differences in a refugee's motivation for acculturation, and that an artifact of social desirability may have biased the responses.

Patterns of Interpersonal Communication

Results from the analysis of interpersonal communication relationship patterns are summarized in Table 5. (See Table 5.) On all three levels of interpersonal relationships ("acquaintances," "casual friends," and "intimate friends"), there was a consistent pattern of predominant affiliation among the refugees within the same ethnic community. Interaction between the respondents and individuals outside of their own community seems minimal, particularly on the two more intimate levels of interpersonal relationships, i.e., casual friends and intimate friends.

The median number of acquaintances of the respondents was 25 within their own ethnic group, 10 among other Indochinese refugees, 10 among White Americans, 4 among Black Americans, and 5 among other foreign immigrants. This distribution pattern of casual acquaintances among different groups, however, was not present on the levels of casual friends and imtimate friends. The median number of casual and intimate friends within the respondent's own ethnic group was 10 and 4 respectively. On the other hand, the median number of casual and intimate friends from all other groups was 0.

Table (4): Percentage Distribution of Acculturation Motivation

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	A Little Important	Not Important	Total (N)
Understanding the ways that American people behave and think.	67%	26%	5%	2%	100% (767)
Making friends with American people.	50%	34%	9%	7%	100% (764)
Learning about events/ issues of American society.	73%	21%	5%	1%	100% (766)

Table (5): Median Number of Acquaintances, Casual Friends, and Intimate Friends

	Acquaintances	Casual Friends	Intimate Friends
Own Ethnic Group	25	10	4
Other Indochinese	10	0	0
White Americans	10	0	0
Black Americans	4	0	0
Other Foreign Immigrants	5	0	0

Rational Analysis

Given the foregoing description of the Indochinese refugees' intrapersonal and interpersonal communication patterns, an attempt has been made to determine the interrelationships among the identified variables.

Variables of Intrapersonal Communication: The Pearson Correlation r's among the variables of intrapersonal communication are reported in Table 6. Some of the notable observations from this analysis are summarized below.

First, there was a positive relationship between the refugee's images of Self and that of Americans ($r = .14$, $p < .001$). A similar positive relationship was seen between the refugee's images of Self and of his/her own Ethnic Group ($r = .43$, $p < .001$). On the other hand, an inverse relationship was suggested between the refugee's images of Self and the perceived discrepancy between the Self and Americans ($r = -.47$, $p < .001$). Also, the refugee's image of Self was inversely related to the perceived discrepancy between Self and his/her own Ethnic Group ($r = -.11$, $p < .001$), and to the perceived discrepancy getween Ethnic Group and Americans ($r = -.25$, $p < .001$). These results suggest that the refugee who has a more positive self-image tends to perceive Americans, as well as his/her own Ethnic Group, more positively, and that he/she will perceive fewer discrepancies between himself/herself, Americans, and his/her own Ethnic Group.

Second, there was seen an inverse relationship between the refugee's Motivation for Acculturation and his/her perception of his/her own Ethnic

Table (6): Pearson Correlation r among Intrapersonal Communication Variables

	Self	American	Ethnic Group	Self-American	Self-Ethnic	Amer.-Ethnic	Alienation	English	Motivation
Self	1.00	.14**	.43**	-.47**	-.11*	-.25**	.37**	.18**	.00
American		1.00	.50**	.37**	.29**	.02	.00	-.30**	.05
Ethnic Group			1.00	.02	.48**	-.54**	.30**	.03	.10*
Self-American				1.00	.32**	.54**	-.35**	-.30**	-.03
Self-Ethnic					1.00	-.19**	.06	-.00	-.16**
American-Ethnic						1.00	.31**	.15**	.13**
Alienation							1.00	-.37**	.19**
English								1.00	.10*
Motivation									1.00

Note: $^{**}p < .001$, $^{*}p < .005$

Group (r = -.10, p < .005), and to his/her feeling of Alienation (r = -.19, p < .001). The more motivated a refugee was to acculturate into the American socio-cultural system, the less positive was his/her perception of his/her own Ethnic Group and the less he/she felt alienated in the new environment.

Third, the refugee's English competence seemed inversely related to his/her perceived discprepancy between Self and Americans (r = -.30, p < .001), as well as to his/her feeling of Alienation (r = -.37, p < .001). Also, the refugee's perception of Americans tended to be inversely related to his/her English competence (r = -.30, p < .001). These results indicate that the greater the refugee's competence in English, the less discrepancy he/she will see between himself/herself and Americans and the less alienated he/she will feel from Americans. On the other hand, the refugee's competence in English seemed inversely related to his/her perception of Americans, i.e.: the more competent the refugee was in English, the more negative was his/her perception of Americans.

Variables of Interpersonal Communication: Table 7 describes the relationships among the variables of interpersonal communication as assessed by the refugee's interpersonal relationships (among his/her own Ethnic Group, other Indochinese Refugees and White Americans) on three levels of intimacy (Casual Acquaintances, Casual Friends, and Intimate Friends). Only the refugee's interpersonal relationships with White Americans have been included here because of the minimal contact of the refugees with Black Americans and other foreign immigrants. (See Table 5.) In this analysis, all relationships among the variables were observed positive and statistically significant at least on the level, p < .05. This result suggests that a refugee who actively participates in interaction

with one group is likely to also be active in his/her interpersonal communication with other groups. Furthermore, a refugee with more interpersonal relationships on one level of intimacy seems to have more interpersonal relationships on other levels of intimacy as well. (See Table 7.)

Intrapersonal and Interpersonal Communication: Finally, the five propositions presented earlier in Section B based on the interactive theory of acculturation have been tested against the observed correlation coefficients among the variables of intrapersonal communication and interpersonal communication. (See Table 8.)

Proposition 1, predicting a positive relationship between an immigrant's self image and his/her participation in interpersonal communication with members of the host society, was supported in this study. The Pearson Correlation r between the two variables was .01 ($p < .001$).

Proposition 2, predicting an inverse relationship between the perceived discrepancy in an immigrant's image of himself/herself and of Americans and his/her participation in interpersonal communication with Americans, was also supported in this study. The Pearson Correlation r between the two variables was -.10 ($p < .05$).

Proposition 3, predicting an inverse relationship between an immigrant's feeling of alienation and his/her participation in interpersonal communication with members of the host society, was supported in the present study. The Pearson Correlation r between the two variables was -.14 ($p < .01$).

Proposition 4, predicting a positive relationship between an immigrant's motivation for acculturation and his/her participation in

interpersonal communication with members of the host society, was not supported by the data. The Pearson Correlation r between the two variables, -.05, was not statistically significant.

Proposition 5, predicting a positive relationship between an immigrant's English competence and his/her participation in interpersonal communication with members of the host society, was supported in this study. The Pearson Correlation r between the two variables was .33 ($p < .001$).

These results indicate that the Indochinese refugee's interpersonal communication with Americans is positively related to his/her positive self-image, less discrepancy perceived between Self and Americans, less feeling of alienation, and greater English competence. Thus, four of the original five propositions derived from the interactive communication theory of the acculturation process have been empirically supported among the Indochinese refugees, most of whose residency in the United States was less than one year at the time of the survey. Although the proposed relationship between the immigrant's acculturation motivation and his/her interpersonal communication with Americans was not supported, the low reliability of the measurement items used in the survey discourages a decisive conclusion.

Table (7): Pearson Correlation r among Interpersonal Communication Variables

		(A) Own Ethnic Group			(B) Other Indochinese			(C) White American		
		Acq.	Frnd.	Int. Frnd.	Acq.	Frnd.	Int. Frnd.	Acq.	Frnd.	Int. Frnd.
(A)	Acq.	1.00	.64***	.58**	.43**	.29**	.18**	.37**	.33**	.27**
	Frnd.		1.00	.60**	.32**	.34**	.60**	.36 *	.40**	.25**
	Int. Frnd.			1.00	.43**	.32**	.14**	.29**	.26**	.37**
(B)	Acq.				1.00	.44**	.31**	.55**	.33**	.34**
	Frnd.					1.00	.66**	.32**	.51**	.38**
	Int. Frnd.						1.00	.34**	.33**	.38**
(C)	Acq.							1.00	.62**	.39**
	Frnd.								1.00	.65**
	Int. Frnd.									1.00

Note: **$p < .001$, *$p < .01$, All other r's are statistically significant on the levels $p < .05$.

Table (8): Pearson Correlation r among Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Communication Variables

Interpersonal \ Intrapersonal	Self	American	Ethnic Group	Self-Amer.	Self-Ethnic	Amer.-Ethnic	Alienation	English	Motivation
Ethnic Group Acquaintance	.06	-.25***	-.20***	-.15***	-.23***	.08*	.07	.16***	-.04
Other Indochinese Acquaintance	.15*	-.24***	-.03	-.06	-.11	.02	-.03	.30***	-.11*
White American Acquaintance	.17***	.21***	-.00	-.10*	-.05	.06	-.14**	.33***	-.05

Note: ***$p < .001$, **$p < .01$, *$p < .05$

CONCLUSION

The recent immigration of Indochinese refugees has provided a valuable source of information concerning the nature of acculturation. The present analysis of the Indochinese refugees' communication patterns has shown a number of insights into their experiences in the initial phase of the acculturation process. It has been observed that the Indochinese refugees communicate primarily with members of their own ethnic group on all levels of intimacy. Their interactions with individuals outside their own community are minimal and are limited mostly to other Indochinese refugees and White Americans. Black Americans and other foreign immigrant groups have not yet been incorporated into the interpersonal communication networks of the refugees.

The refugees' intrapersonal communication patterns show a general tendency of negative self-image, feeling of alienation, lack of competence in English, and a high degree of dissimilarity between themselves and Americans. Although most refugees expressed a considerable desire to acculturate into the American socio-cultural system, the low reliability of the measurement used in the present study discourages a concrete interpretation.

In addition to the descriptive information on the refugees' communication patterns, the study has empirically verified four of the five propositions concerning the interactive nature of relationships between an immigrant's intrapersonal communication and his/her interpersonal communication patterns. A refugee's higher self-image, English compentence, motivation for acculturation, and his/her lower feeling of alienation, have been found significantly associated with his/her greater

participation in interpersonal communication with members of the host society.

The immigrant's motivation for acculturation, however, has not been found significantly related to his/her interpersonal communication with members of the host society. Most of the refugees expressed a considerable desire to acculturate into the American culture, suggesting a possible bias of "social desirability" in the responses. One can also speculate that, during the initial phase of acculturation, an immigrant's motivation may not significantly affect his/her communication behavior due to other more impending factors such as lack of English competence. A more elaborate and sensitive measurement of acculturation motivation needs to be developed in future research.

The majority of the respondents in this study had lived in the United States less than one year at the time of the survey. The empirical support for the four propositions enhances the generality and explanatory power of the underlying theory, i.e., the interactive communication theory of acculturation. Future empirical research testing the same theoretical assumptions and propositions among different immigrant groups with different immigration history will further strengthen the theoretical basis of the present study.

Finally, the present study has attempted to bridge the gap between psychological and sociological studies on acculturation. Most of the psychological studies on acculturation have focused on intrapersonal variables (e.g., alienation, psychological disorder, and other mental health related variables) without including the social interaction patterns of immigrants in their conceptual framework. (See Olmedo, 1978, for a detailed review.) On the other hand, many sociological studies focusing on "social integration" of immigrant groups have developed

indices to assess the degree of an immigrant's social participation and adjustment. These sociological studies, however, have not closely examined the relationship between the variables of social integration and the variables of psychological adjustment. (See, for example, Spindler & Goldschmidt, 1952; Lazerwitz, 1954; DeFleur & Cho, 1957; Richmond, 1967, among others.)

Acculturation is a dynamic, multidimensional process; an immigrant's psychological, social, and all other processes are closely interrelated and concurrent. To provide a more comprehensive and realistic description, explanation, and prediction of the acculturation process, efforts need to be made to link the various dimensions of acculturation. The interactive communication approach to acculturation in the present study is an initial attempt to provide such linkages.

FOOTNOTES

1. The figures and predictions are based on the statements made by Mr. Gene Niewoehner, Coordinator, Indochinese Refugee Assistance Program, HEW-Region V, during his persentation at the American Psychological Association Annual Convention, New York, September 3, 1979.

2. The figures are based on the information reported in Indochinese Refugee Report, Vol. 1, No. 4, October 30, 1979. The Report is published by American Public Welfare Association.

3. See J.S. Aames, R.L. Aames, J. Jung, and E. Karabenick, Indochinese Refugee Self-Sufficiency in California: A Survey and Analysis of the Vietnamese, Cambodians, and Lao and the Agencies that Serve Them. Report submitted to State Department of Health, State of California, September 1977; C. Sedanko and T.R. Tutchings, Needs Assessment of the Texas Indochinese Refugee Population, Phase I Report, July 1978. Published by the Texas Department of Human Resources.

4. Many of the Indochinese refugees maintain an extended family system, sharing common resources and activities.

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